AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. **(currently amended):** An isolated protein having an endoglucanase activity, obtained from a microorganism belonging to genus *Staphylotrichum*, wherein said isolated protein is selected from the group consisting of:

(a) a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:3, and

(b) a homologous protein comprising an amino acid sequence having at least an 95% identity with SEQ ID NO:3, and having an endoglucanase activity.

2. **(currently amended):** The isolated protein according to claim 1, having

~~(A) an endogluconase activity, and~~

~~(B)~~ the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 at the N-terminus thereof.

3. **(currently amended):** The isolated protein according to claim 2, having

~~(A) an encoglucanase activity,~~

~~(B) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 at the N-terminus thereof, and~~

~~(C)~~ an average molecular weight of 49 kD, determined by a sodium dodecyl sulfate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.

4. **(currently amended):** The isolated protein according to claim 2, having

~~(A) an encoglucanase activity,~~

~~(B) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 at the N-terminus thereof, and~~

~~(C)~~ an average molecular weight of 45 kD, determined by a sodium dodecyl sulfate-polyacrylamide gel electrophoresis.

5. (previously presented): The isolated protein according to claim 1, derived from *Staphylotrichum coccosporum*.

6. (canceled).

7. (withdrawn and currently amended): An isolated polynucleotide encoding the protein according to claim ~~6~~1.

8. (withdrawn and currently amended): An isolated polynucleotide that encodes the isolated protein of claim 1, selected from the group consisting of:

(i) a polynucleotide comprising the nucleotide sequence consisting of nucleotides 64-948 of SEQ ID NO: 2, and

(ii) a polynucleotide hybridizing under stringent conditions to a polynucleotide consisting of the nucleotide sequence consisting of nucleotides 64-948 of SEQ ID NO: 2, and encoding a protein having an endoglucanase activity.

9. (withdrawn): An expression vector comprising the polynucleotide according to claim 7.

10. (withdrawn): A host cell transformed with the expression vector according to claim 9.

11. (withdrawn): The host cell according to claim 10, wherein the host is a yeast or a filamentous fungus.

12. (withdrawn): The host cell according to claim 11, wherein the yeast is a microorganism belonging to genus *Saccharomyces, Hansenula*, or *Pichia.*

13. (withdrawn): The host cell according to claim 11, wherein the filamentous fungus is a microorganism belonging to genus *Humicola*, *Trichoderma*, *Staphylotrichum*, *Aspergillus*, *Fusarium*, or *Acremonium.*

14. (withdrawn): The host cell according to claim 13, the filamentous fungus is *Humicola insolens* or *Trichoderma viride.*

15. (withdrawn and currently amended): A process for producing the protein according to claim 6, comprising the steps of: cultivating a host cell transformed with an expression vector comprising a polynucleotide encoding the protein according to claim ~~6~~1, and collecting the protein from the host cell or a culture obtained by the cultivation.

16. (currently amended): An isolated protein produced by a process comprising: cultivating a host cell transformed with an expression vector comprising a polynucleotide

encoding the protein according to claim ~~6~~1; and

collecting the protein from the host cell or a culture obtained by the cultivation.

17. (previously presented): A cellulase preparation comprising the protein according to claim 1.

18. (previously presented): A detergent composition comprising the protein according to claim 1.

19. (withdrawn): A method of treating a cellulose-containing fabric, comprising the step of bringing the cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1.

20. (withdrawn): A method of reducing fuzzing of a cellulose-containing fabric or reducing a rate of the formation of fuzz, comprising the step of bringing the cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1.

21. (withdrawn): A method of reducing weight to improve the touch feel and appearance of a cellulose-containing fabric, comprising the step of bringing the cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1.

22. (withdrawn): A method of color clarification of a colored cellulose-containing fabric, comprising the step of bringing the colored cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1.

23. (withdrawn): A method of providing a localized color change to a colored cellulose-containing fabric, comprising the step of bringing the colored cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1.

24. (withdrawn): A method of reducing stiffness of a cellulose-containing fabric or reducing a rate of the formation of stiffness, comprising the step of bringing the cellulose-containing fabric into contact with the protein according to claim 1.

25. (withdrawn): The method according to claim 19, wherein the treatment of the fabric is carried out by soaking, washing, or rinsing the fabric.

26. (withdrawn): A method of deinking waste paper, comprising the step of treating the waste paper with the protein according to claim 1.

27. (withdrawn): A method of improving a water freeness of paper pulp, comprising the step of treating the paper pulp with the protein according to claim 1.

28. (withdrawn): A method of improving a digestibility of animal feed, comprising the step of treating a cellulose-containing fabric with the protein according to claim 1.